

**HOLY  
SPIRIT  
POWER**

**CHARLES SPURGEON**



WHITAKER  
HOUSE

*Publisher's Note:*

This new edition from Whitaker House has been updated for the modern reader. Words, expressions, and sentence structure have been revised for clarity and readability.

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

## **HOLY SPIRIT POWER**

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# One

## THE COMFORTER

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

—John 14:26

That good old Simeon waited for “*the consolation of Israel*” (Luke 2:25), and so Jesus was. Before His actual appearance, His name was Day Star, which means “cheering the darkness” and is prophetic for the rising sun. The disciples looked to Him with the same hope that cheers the nightly watcher as he faithfully waits for the sun to rise in the morning. When Christ was on earth, He must have been the consolation of all those who were privileged to be His companions. We

can imagine how readily the disciples ran to Christ to tell Him of their sorrows, and how sweetly, with that matchless intonation of His voice, He spoke to them and bade their fears be gone. Like children, they would consider Him as their Father.

Every want, every groan, every sorrow, every agony was promptly carried to Him; and He, like a wise physician, had a balm for every wound. He had a solution for their every care, and He readily dispensed mighty remedies for all of the fever of their troubles.

It must have been sweet to have lived with Christ. Sorrows were masked joys because they presented an opportunity to go to Jesus to have them removed. Oh, if only we could have placed our weary heads upon Jesus' chest and our births had been in that happy era when we might have heard His kind voice and seen His kind look as He said, "*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matthew 11:28).

When He was about to die, great prophecies and great purposes were to be fulfilled. Jesus had to go. He had to suffer so that He could be our redemption from sin. He had to slumber in the dust a while so that He might perfume the chamber of the grave.

His resurrection took place so that one day, we, the dead in Christ, might rise first and stand in glorious bodies upon earth. “He ascended up on high” so that He might make “*captivity captive*” (Psalm 68:18; Ephesians 4:8). He chained the fiends of hell, lashing them to His chariot wheels and dragging them high upon heaven’s hill. This was to make them feel a second overthrow from His right arm when He dashed them from the pinnacles of heaven down to deeper depths beneath.

Hear how kindly Jesus spoke:

*It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

(John 16:7)

*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.*

(John 14:16)

He would not leave those few poor sheep alone in the wilderness. He would not desert His children and leave them fatherless. Before He left, He gave soothing words of comfort.

There are different meanings of the Greek word *paraclete*, which is translated here as “*Comforter*.” Early translators employed transliteration, having left the original word in the Greek but transcribed it into our alphabet to form the word *paraclete*. As a name of the Holy Spirit, *Paraclete* has some other meanings besides “*comforter*.” Frequently it means “*monitor*,” “*teacher*,” or “*instructor*.” Often it means “*advocate*,” but the most common meaning of the word is “*comforter*.” Still, we can’t pass over those other meanings without saying something about them.

### *The Holy Spirit as Teacher*

Jesus Christ had been the official instructor of His saints while He was on earth. They called no man Rabbi except Christ. They sat not at the feet of men to learn their doctrines, but they heard them directly from the lips of Him who spoke as no other man has ever spoken. When Christ was to leave, where would people find another infallible teacher? Should they go to a Pope in Rome to be their infallible oracle? Should they lean on the councils of the church to decide all knotty points? Christ said no such things.

*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* (John 14:16)

Inserting the name of Instructor for Comforter, we can see Christ prayed for us to be sent another Instructor to be the person to explain Scripture, to be the authoritative Oracle of God, who will make all dark things light, who will unravel mysteries, who will untwist all knots of revelation, and who will make you understand what you could not discover had it not been for His influence. No man ever learns anything correctly unless he is taught by the Spirit. No man can know Jesus Christ unless he is taught by God.

There is no doctrine of the Bible that can be safely, thoroughly, or truly learned without the one authoritative Teacher. Tell me not of systems of divinity, of schemes of theology, of infallible commentators, of the most learned people, or of the most arrogant doctors, but tell me of the great Teacher who will instruct the sons of God and make us wise to understand all things.

The Holy Spirit is the Teacher. It matters not what this or that man says. I rest on no man's boasting

authority, nor should you. You are not to be carried away by the craftiness of men or a sleight of words. The Holy Spirit is resting in the hearts of His children.

### *The Holy Spirit as Advocate*

Another translation is "Advocate." Have you ever thought about how the Holy Spirit can be called an advocate? You know Jesus Christ is called Wonderful, Counselor, and mighty God, but how can the Holy Spirit be called Advocate? I suppose it is because He is our Advocate on earth to plead against the enemies of the cross. How was it that Paul could so ably plead before Felix and Agrippa? How was it that the apostles stood without fear before the magistrates and confessed their Lord? How has it come to pass that God's ministers have been made as fearless as lions, their brows firmer than brass, their hearts sterner than steel, and their words like the language of God? It is simply that it was not the men who pleaded, but it was God the Holy Spirit pleading through them.

Besides this, the Holy Spirit is the Advocate in men's hearts. I have known of men who have rejected a doctrine until the Spirit began to illumine and enlighten them. We who are the advocates of the truth

are often very poor pleaders. We spoil our cause by the words we use, but it is a mercy that the Holy Spirit will advocate successfully through us and overcome each sinner's opposition.

Did you ever know Him to fail, even once? Has God not convinced you of sin in the past? Did the Holy Spirit not prove to you that you were guilty even though no minister could ever get you out of your self-righteousness? Did He not advocate Christ's righteousness? Did He not tell you that your works were dirty rags? Did He not convince you of the judgment to come? He is the mighty Advocate when He pleads in the soul. He makes us aware "*of sin, and of righteousness, and of [the] judgment*" (John 16:8) to come.

Holy Spirit of Christ, Blessed Advocate, plead in my heart, plead in my soul, and plead with my conscience. When I sin, make my conscience bold to tell me. When I err, make my conscience speak at once; and when I turn aside to crooked ways, advocate the cause of righteousness and suggest I lie down in shame and confusion, knowing my guiltiness in the sight of God.

There is even another sense in which the Holy Spirit advocates. He intercedes for us as He advocates our cause to Jesus Christ “*with groanings which cannot be uttered*” (Romans 8:26). When my soul is ready to burst within me, my heart is swollen with grief, or the hot tide of my emotions is near overflowing from my veins, I long to speak, but the very desire chains my tongue. I wish to pray, but the fervency of my feeling curbs my language. There is a groaning within me that cannot be uttered.

Do you know who can utter that groaning, who can understand it, and who can put it into heavenly language and utter it in a celestial tongue so that Christ can hear it? It is God the Holy Spirit. He advocates our cause with Christ, and Christ then advocates it with the Father. He is the Advocate, and He makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.

### *The Holy Spirit as Comforter*

Having explained the Spirit’s office as Teacher and Advocate, I come now to the translation in our verse—the Comforter. Regarding this translation, I

make three divisions: the Comforter, the Comfort, and the Comforted.

## The Comforter

First, God the Holy Spirit is our very *loving* Comforter. If I am in distress and want consolation, and if some passerby hears of my sorrow, steps in, sits down, and tries to cheer me; he speaks soothing words, but he loves me not. He is a stranger, who knows me not at all, and has only come to try his skill. What is the consequence? His words run over me like oil upon a slab of marble. They are like the pattering rain upon a rock; they do not break my grief, and I stand unmoved because he has no love for me.

On the contrary, let someone who loves me as dearly as his own life come and plead with me. Truly these words are music, and they taste like honey. He knows the password for the doors of my heart, and my ear is attentive to His every word. I catch the intonation of each syllable as it falls, for it is like the harmony of the harps of heaven. It is a voice in love, and it speaks a language that is its own. It is an idiom and an accent that none can mimic. Wisdom cannot imitate it, and oratory cannot attain it. It is love alone

that can reach the mourning heart. Love is the only handkerchief that can wipe the mourner's tears away.

Is not the Holy Spirit our loving Comforter? Do you not know how much the Holy Spirit loves you? Can you not measure the love of the Spirit? Do you not know how great the affection of His soul is towards you? Go and measure heaven, weigh the mountains in scales, take the ocean's water and count each drop, and count the sand upon the sea's wide shore. When you have accomplished all of this, you can tell how much He loves you. He has greatly loved you, loved you for a long time, and will always love you. Surely He is the person to comfort you because He loves you. Admit Him into your heart so that He may comfort you in your distress.

Also, He is our *faithful* Comforter. Love sometimes proves unfaithful. Far more bitter than the gall of bitterness is to have a friend turn from me in my distress. Oh, woe of woes to have one who loves me in my prosperity forsake me in the dark day of my trouble. God's Spirit is not like this. He ever loves, and He loves to the end.

Trust Him. Maybe a little while ago you found the sweet, loving Comforter, and you obtained relief

from Him. When others failed you, He sheltered you in His bosom and carried you in His arms. Oh, why distrust Him now? Away with your fears. He is your faithful Comforter.

You may say, "But I have sinned." So you have, but sin cannot sever you from His love; He still loves you. Do not think that the scars of your old sins have marred your beauty or that He loves you less because of that blemish. He loved you when He foreknew your sin, and He does not love you any less now. Come to Him in all boldness of faith, and tell Him that you are sorry that you grieved Him. He will forget your wandering and will receive you again. The kisses of His love will be bestowed on you, and the arms of His grace will embrace you. He is faithful, so trust Him. He will never deceive you. He will never leave you.

How *wise* a comforter is the Holy Spirit. Job had comforters, and I think he spoke the truth when he said, "*Miserable comforters are ye all*" (Job 16:2). Did people not comprehend his grief and sorrow? They thought that he was not really a child of God. They thought that he was self-righteous, and they gave him the wrong treatment. It is bad when a doctor mistakes a disease and gives a wrong prescription.

Sometimes when we go and visit people, we mistake their disease. We want to comfort them on a point where they do not require any comfort at all, and they would be better left alone than spoiled by such unwise comforters. But, how wise the Holy Spirit is. He takes the soul, lays it on the table, and dissects it in a moment. He finds out the root of the matter, sees where the complaint is, and either applies the knife where something is required to be taken away or puts a bandage where the sore is. He never makes mistakes. From every comforter except the Holy Spirit I turn, for He alone gives the wisest consolation.

Mark how *safe* a comforter the Holy Spirit is. All comfort is not safe. There is a very melancholy young man over there. He became so because he stepped into the house of God and heard a powerful preacher. The Word was blessed and convinced him of sin. When he went home, his father and the rest found that there was something different about him. "Oh," they said, "John is mad. He is crazy." His mother said, "Send him into the country for a week. Let him go dancing or to the theater."

Did John find any comfort there? No. They made him feel worse, for while he was there, he thought hell

might open and swallow him up. Did he find any relief in the gaieties of the world? No, he thought they were an idle waste of time. They are miserable comfort, but they are the comfort of the world.

When a Christian is in distress, many may recommend this remedy or another. There have been many, such as infants, destroyed by the elixirs that were given to lull them to sleep. Many have been ruined by the cry of peace when there is none. They hear gentle things when they ought to be stirred to the quick. Cleopatra's serpent was sent in a basket of flowers, and men's ruin often lurks in fair and sweet speeches. Quite the opposite, the Holy Spirit's comfort is safe, and you may rest on it. Let Him speak the Word, and there is a reality about it. Let Him give the cup of consolation, and you may drink it to the bottom, for in its depths there is nothing to intoxicate or ruin. It is all safe.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit is our *active* Comforter. He does not comfort by words but by deeds. As in James 2:16, some people comfort by saying, "*Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled;* [but] *notwithstanding [they] give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*" As this verse says, the words provide nothing. However, the Holy Spirit gives.

He intercedes with Jesus, gives us promises, gives us grace, and in these ways, He comforts us.

He is always a *successful* Comforter. He never attempts what He cannot accomplish.

Remember, you never have to send for Him. Your Comforter is always *near* you, and when you need comfort in your distress, the Word is near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart. (See Romans 10:8.) He is an ever-present help in times of trouble. (See Psalm 46:1.)

## The Comfort

Now, there are some people who make a great mistake about the influence of the Holy Spirit. A foolish man had a desire to preach in a certain pulpit. Even though he was quite incapable of the duty, he called upon the minister and assured him solemnly that the Holy Spirit revealed to him that he was to preach in his pulpit. "Very well," said the minister, "I suppose I must not doubt your assertion, but it has not yet been revealed to me that I am to let you preach. So, you must go your way until it is."

I have heard many fanatical people say that the Holy Spirit has revealed this original insight or that

new idea to them. This is nonsense. The Holy Spirit does not reveal anything fresh now. He brings old things to mind.

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*  
(John 14:26)

The canon of revelation is closed. There is no more to be added.

God does not give a new revelation, but He fixes and freshens the old one. When it has been forgotten and laid in the dusty chamber of our memory, He fetches it out and cleans the picture but does not paint a new one. There are no new doctrines, but the old ones are often revived.

It is not by any new revelation that the Spirit comforts. He does so by telling us old things over again. He brings a fresh lamp to manifest the treasures hidden in Scripture. He unlocks the strong chests where the truth had long been, and He points to secret chambers filled with untold riches. However, He mints no new coins, for enough is done.

There is enough in the Bible for you to live on forever. If your life should outnumber the years of Methuselah, there would be no need for a fresh revelation. If you should live until Christ comes back upon the earth, there would be no necessity for the addition of a single word. If you should go down as deep as Jonah or descend as David said he did into the belly of hell, there would be enough in the Bible to comfort you without a supplementary sentence. Christ said, *“All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you”* (John 16:15).

The Holy Spirit whispers to the heart. He says things such as, “Be of good cheer. There is One who died for you. Look to Calvary; behold His wounds; see the torrent gushing from His side—there is your Purchaser, and you are secure. He loves you with an everlasting love, and this chastisement is meant for your good. Each stroke is working your healing. By the blueness of the wound, your soul is made better.” *“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth”* (Hebrews 12:6).

Do not doubt His grace because of your tribulation, but believe that He loves you as much in seasons

of trouble as in times of happiness. And what is all your distress, when weighed in the scales of Jesus' agonies?

Especially at times when the Holy Spirit takes back the veil of heaven and lets the soul behold the glory of the upper world, then that saint can say,

Oh, thou art a Comforter to me.

Let cares like a wild deluge come,  
And storms of sorrow fall.

May I but safely reach my home,  
My God, my heaven, my all.

Were I to tell of the manifestations of heaven, some of you could follow. You, too, have left sun, moon, and stars at your feet, while in your flight you outstripped the tardy lightning. You have seemed to enter the gates of pearl and to tread the golden streets while borne aloft on wings of the Spirit. But at this point, we must not trust ourselves because we could become lost in reverie and forget our theme.

## The Comforted

Who are the comforted people? I like to cry out at the end of my sermons, "Divide. Divide," because

there are two parties. Some are the comforted, and others the comfortless. Some have received the consolation of the Holy Spirit, and others have not. Let me try to sift my readers to see which is the chaff and which is the wheat. May God grant some of the chaff to be transformed into His wheat.

You may say, "How am I to know whether I am a recipient of the comfort of the Holy Spirit?" You may know it by one rule: if you have received one blessing from God, you will receive all other His other blessings, too.

Let me explain myself. If I were an auctioneer and could sell the gospel off in lots, I would dispose of it all. If I could say, "Here is justification through the blood of Christ, free, given away, *gratis*."

Many people would say, "I will have justification. Give it to me. I wish to be justified, and I wish to be pardoned."

Suppose I offered sanctification, the giving up of all sin, a thorough change of heart, leaving off drunkenness and swearing. Many would say, "I don't want that. I would like to go to heaven, but I do not want that holiness. I would like to be saved, but I would like

to have my drink still. I would like to enter glory, but I must be able to curse on the road.”

If you have one blessing, you will have all. God will never divide the gospel. He will not give justification to one and sanctification to another, or pardon to one and holiness to another. No, it all goes together.

*Whom he did predestinate, them he also called:  
and whom he called, them he also justified: and  
whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

(Romans 8:30)

Oh, if I could lay down nothing but the comforts of the gospel, you would swarm to them as flies do to honey! When you become ill, you send for the clergyman. You all want your minister to come then and give you consoling words. However, if he is an honest man, he will not give some of you a particle of consolation. He will not commence with pouring oil when the knife would be better.

I want to make a man feel his sins before I dare tell him anything about Christ. I want to probe into his soul and make him feel that he is lost before I tell him anything about the purchased blessing.

Have you been convicted of sin? Have you ever felt your guilt before God? Has your soul been humbled at Jesus' feet? And, have you been made to look to Calvary alone for your refuge? If not, you have no right to consolation. Do not take an atom of it. The Spirit comes to convict before He comforts, and you must have the other operations of the Holy Spirit before you can derive anything from this.

What do you know about the Comforter? Let this solemn question thrill through your soul. If you do not know the Comforter, I will tell you whom you will know. You will know the Judge. If you do not know the Comforter on earth, you will know the Condemner in the next world. He will cry, "*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*" (Matthew 25:41).

Well might Whitefield call out, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord." If we were to live here forever, you might slight the gospel. If you had a lease on life, you might despise the Comforter. However, you must die. Probably, some have gone to their long last home, and some will soon be among the glorified above or among the damned below. Which will it be for you? Let your soul answer. If you fell

down dead tonight, where would you be—in heaven or in hell?

Do not be deceived. Let conscience have its perfect work, and if, in the sight of God, you are obliged to say, “I tremble and fear that my lot should be with unbelievers,” listen one moment. *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”* (Mark 16:16).

Weary sinner, the devil’s castaway, reprobate one, wicked one, harlot, robber, thief, adulterer, fornicator, drunkard, swearer, Sabbath-breaker, I am addressing you as well as the redeemed. I exempt no man. God has said that there is no exemption here.

*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* (Romans 10:9)

Sin is no barrier, and your guilt is no obstacle. Although as black as Satan or as deceptive as a fiend, whosoever believes will have every sin forgiven, will have every crime effaced, will have every iniquity blotted out, will be saved in the Lord Jesus Christ, and will stand in heaven safe and secure. This is the glorious

gospel. May God make it hit home in your heart and give you faith in Jesus.

We have listened to the preacher—  
    Truth by him has now been shown;  
But we want a Greater Teacher,  
    From the everlasting throne:  
*Application* is the work of God alone.